

March 14, 2023

Honorable Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Jamie O'Connor, and I am the mother of a beautiful 6-year-old with special needs. Scarlett currently attends the ACES Village School, where she is a member of the EIBI program. When it was decided that Scarlett would be outplaced from our home district, my husband and I visited several schools throughout the state, both private and public. We left many of those visits feeling discouraged.

The Village School was a breath of fresh air to parents that felt as if their child would never find a place where she could shine. The school is home to an amazing faculty and staff. Their pride in their work and students can be felt in the positive energy that flows through the building. A true testament to this is that my daughter runs out of the house in pure joy each morning to get on the bus for a 45-minute ride there. When you are a parent to a nonverbal child, you continuously struggle with trusting people to be her voice and advocate in your absence. Knowing she is excited to head to school every day and watching her flourish over the past few months is everything we could have hoped for. Her team celebrates her successes with us, and I know they have her best interest at heart.

I am writing this letter in hopes that you will approve the Bassett Road project in Senate Bill 1201. This will allow the Village School to continue preparing students who have found a home there, like Scarlett, for a more independent future. My dream for my daughter is that she grows to be a happy adult who reaches her fullest potential. Through this Bill, the Village School will be able to provide her and other students with learning experiences that will give them some independence in their everyday life. This program will help them prepare for the transition into adulthood while at the same time giving peace of mind to families like ours that worry about their child's future. Thank you for taking the time to read this. If you have any questions regarding our experiences, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jamie O'Connor

(203)501-7331

Jldallacco@gmail.com

45 Mount Nebo Rd

Newtown, Ct 06470